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fix buffalo today

a view from recently demolished 669 Genesee Street

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3 Comments

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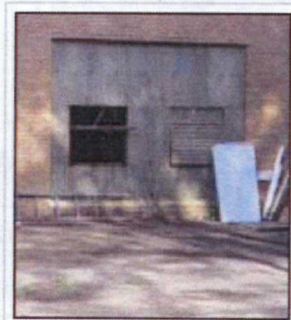
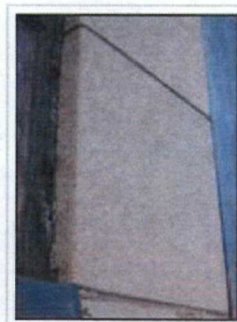
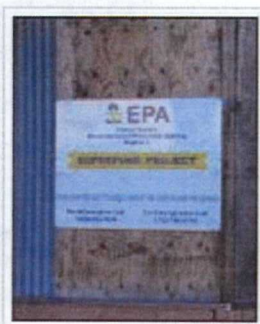
Sweet Kleen(ed)!

In [Thursday's Buffalo News](#), we learned that the "Sweet Kleen" site at [764 Kensington Avenue](#) (see google satellite image...awesome view) is being cleaned up! While this is a very good thing and the EPA has been doing fantastic work here in WNY with Superfund dollars, *Buffalo News* staff reporter John F. Bonfatti failed to mention that the current owner of the property is, yes...brace yourself...the City of Buffalo! Here's [the official property description](#). There was no mention in Bonfatti's article of the environmental hazards and levels of contamination. Another example of *loserville journalism*.

[click to enlarge](#)

On my way to dinner Thursday evening I took the opportunity to check out the property to see what was going on. I spoke with a few long term neighbors - 25 years in one case - of the site. He had no clue who the owner was and the amount of money that was being spent to remediate the site and demolish the structure. I told him about the article in the paper and the \$600,000 that it was going to take. He told me he would'nt give me six cents for the place.

So, sort of knowing how the city takes care of its property, I wanted to take a closer look. I walked around to the Federal Avenue side of the property and noticed that the window here was wide open. I'm not an environmental engineer or toxicologist, but wouldn't you think the EPA and the SuperFund peopel would have at least secured the window? Neighborhood kids had just found a crate of old record albums in the building and shared their new treasure with me. A 7th grade boy gave me Aretha's - *Live at Fillmore West*. R-E-S-P-E-C-T...not here, on Buffalo's east side.



click to enlarge

I fully understand the leverage the city needs to have over property owners who do not pay their property taxes, but come on...seriously why take back a property - which is the case here at 764 Kensington Avenue - with known environmental hazards.

I would love to get my hands on the corporate records and find out who knew what when. I mean was anyone in the City's Law Department watching this one. There was a very public auction at the site years ago, which I attended. All sorts of corporate assets were being sold.

There are just so many questions....does anyone have the answers? What about that really cool tile on the building's facade...the deco metal work? Developing...


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3 Responses to “”

 Eric

1:53 PM, June 23, 2005

I drove by this site a few weeks ago on my way to a job site. I love old buildings and found the name "Sweet Kleen Laundry" in stone on the top of the building to be quite amusing. Something you don't see a lot of these days. The stone marker caught my eye and today I stopped to take a picture of it, also so I could remember the name. Now I understand from your article that the building is being torn down and I think it's a huge shame. I of course don't know the building and its many problems. I just hate the idea of any building being taken down. I think we are too quick to destroy and put up new, then to salvage something. Don't forget, Buffalo also tore down the Larkin Building to make way for a parking lot... poor FLLWright.

 **Anonymous**

4:44 PM, July 21, 2006

Please note that the records were located on a parcel that was NOT part of the Sweet Kleen property owned by the City. Remember what you're rifling through may NOT be free to take just because it's not locked up.

 **fix buffalo**

11:43 PM, July 21, 2006

yo,

and you are telling me this because? That was over a year ago - today is 7/21/06 the same date as your comment - they were strewn all over the lot. Please....

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There is a quality even meaner than outright ugliness or disorder, and this meaner quality is the dishonest mask of pretended order, achieved by ignoring or suppressing the real order that is struggling to exist and to be served.
- [Jane Jacobs \(1916-2006\)](#) from *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 1961.

The views expressed here are mine and shouldn't be confused with the mission and statements made by others.

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